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Craven's Choyce



BY EDWARD S. SHARPE, M. D.

PRESIDENT

PAPER READ BEFORE THE SALEM COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON JUNE 9th 1908

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" CRAVEN'S CHOYCE "

By gifts or primary grants from Royalty, the Continent of America is:—North America, as far as it was known, was originally divided amongst great proprietors, individual and corporate, who proceeded to populate them with settlers, usually of the lower orders, who came as laborers, and only in exceptional cases as tenants.

Accustomed as they were to feudal conditions, the first immigrants were still dominated by them, and had no more expectations of owning property themselves in fee, than they had before leaving their native shores, and establishing themselves permanently in the new world.

In New Jersey, however, other sentiments prevailed. The Colonists there looked forward to emancipation from this partial servitude, and to the establishment of commonwealths, where certain liberties could be enjoyed, i e:—the exercise of unrestricted thought, together with religious freedom, which, inconsistent with the arbitrary government they had escaped, gradually broke down the civil and social barriers inherited through centuries of monarchial rule, finally resulting in the great revolution, which secured the Independence the general wealth and power of the inhabitants demanded, and ultimately gained, by the united efforts of their indomitable courage, during the long and sanguinary conflict from which it was evolved.

More than a century of republican or democratic government, since that notable triumph, has swept away all opposition to political suffrage, and proprietorship in the soil, has become the uni-

versal economic law, underlying the foundation of the State.

But, more than two centuries ago, a reaction had commenced in this regard, especially in Nova Caesarea, inaugurated by a regulation of the Proprietors, by which every male settler coming to the Province as a servant, at the expiration of his time, was entitled to one hundred acres of land, generally known as "head lands" contained in surveys of suitable size and divisions, intended for that particular purpose. Previous to this concession, they received only "a set of agricultural implements, necessary articles of apparel, and ten bushels of corn."

Many of these young men, (as stated by several historical writers), who emigrated as servants, and whose names were not even inscribed on the passenger lists of the vessels in which they embarked, (numbers being substituted as more convenient) had considerable natural ability and some education, becoming in time conspicuous members of the community, while their masters as they termed those for whom they worked and with whom they lived and served their times, have, with their descendants, long since been forgotten.

As an example, Joseph Tomlinson, sent to America by Anthony Sharpe, of Dublin, and who in a letter written in 1691, addresses him as "Most respected Master," through his daughter, Elizabeth, who married Bartholomew Wyatt, Jr., became the grandfather of Sarah Wyatt, who married Richard Wistar, of Philadelphia, and thus was great-great-grandfather of their son, Doctor Casper

Wistar, of that City, a graduate, and afterward Professor of Anatomy, in the University of Pennsylvania, one of the most distinguished physicians that institution has ever produced, and whose name will not be forgotten, while the "Wistar Parties," originated by him, shall continue to be observed and honored, and hospitality and social entertainment distinguish Quaker City life.

To illustrate the custom then in vogue, regarding indentured servants, I include the following, viz:—

(Redemptionist Indenture)

(L. S.)

"This Indenture made the ninth day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, seven hundred and twenty-seven, between Samuel Moor of the one part and Alexander McDonall, weaver, of the other part—Witnesseth that the said Alexander McDonall, doth hereby covenant, premise and grant to and with the said Samuel Moor, his executors, administrators and assigns, from the day and date hereof, until the first and next arrival at Pennsylvania or New York and after, for and during the term of five years to serve in such service and employment as the said Samuel Moor or his assigns shall there employ him according to the custom of the country in the like kind. In consideration whereof the said Samuel Moor doth hereby covenant and grant to and with the said Alexander McDonall to pay for his passage and to find and allow meat, drink, apparel, and lodging, and other necessaries, during the said term; and at the end of said term to pay unto him the usual allowance according to the custom of the country in the like kind. In witness whereof the Parties above mentioned to these indentures have interchangeably set their hands and seals, the day and year first aboce mentioned."

his

Alexander (x) McDonall
mark

"Sealed, signed and delivered in the presence of Nath Whitwell, Lord Mayor of Dublin."

"The within servant arrived at New York in the ship "George and John," June 17, 1728."

"Endorsed"

August ye 3d, 1728.

"There came before me the within mentioned Alexander Donall and acknowledged that he was willing to serve Thomas Homs, of Middleton, according to the tenor of this Indenture."

"John Throckmorton."

The above is an assignment of McDonall to another employer after his arrival in America; legally transacted with his consent, a not uncommon practice, done, for a consideration to a considerable extent, if not conducted as a regular business. The price of the passage across the Atlantic in 1686, for a man and wife, was £11.0.0 about \$55.00.

The reference made to grants, by Royal munificence, of large territorial domains in America, to favorites and courtiers, finds an apt illustration in New Jersey, when, March 12, 1663-4, the Duke of York, afterward James II, of England, received from his brother, Charles II, the King, what was known then as New Netherland, extending from St. Croix to the Delaware, and who about the same date, June 23-24, 1664, granted that portion of it called Nova Caesarea or New Jersey, in totality, together with "full powers of government," to Sir George Cartaret and Lord John Berkely, who, from loyalty to the cause of the Stuarts, before and uring the Protectorate of Cromwell, had claims upon the Crown, which were liberally recognized, upon the Restoration in 1660. Cartaret retained possession of his moiety, after the subsequent division, by qumtipartite deed in 1676, but Berkely, (being advanced in years and loosing interest, and hope of future emolument from his province) had in the meantime, viz:—in 1673, sold

to John Fenwick, his share, for one thousand pounds sterling.

By a singular coincidence, not however unusual, in those epochs, (momentous and benificent) in the affairs of men, when history is made, just at this time, George Fox returned to England, from his noted missionary tour through the American Colonies, bringing the "glad tidings" of religious freedom, and his report of the climate and governments there, had a potent influence on the sale of lands then offered to purchasers in London and elsewhere, as well as, in the exodus from their insular homes, that followed, in due course of time, to the great continent beyond the sea.

As the Fenwick-Byllinge movement was composed largely of Friends, it is not singular that the most eminent proselyte then living—William Penn—should become connected with it in various ways; first, as a mediator between Fenwick and Byllinge, in the dispute as to their respective shares of the purchase, which, together with a lack of funds, had, for some two years, retarded the enterprise; subsequently, as one of the trustees for the creditors of Byllinge, and finally, as Proprietor of Fenwick's Tenth, becoming thus, still more closely identified with West Jersey, as well as with the topography and natural resources of the Delaware Littoral, destined to become the site of the City of Brotherly Love.

It would be interesting, were it possible, to know just when William Penn first conceived the idea of colonizing the Province, which afterward bore his name. His father, Admiral Penn, died in 1670. Two years afterward, about ten years before his first voyage to America, he married Gulielma Maria Springett. When the Admiral died, the Crown was indebted to him £16000, which he bequeathed to his son, together with an annuity of £1500. The claim against the

Government was settled in 1681, by the grant of what is now Pennsylvania, and shortly after, the founder sailed in the "Welcome," for his new possession.

It appears to have been about this time, that his mind was contemplating seriously his grand scheme, as, prior to October 1681, we find him engaged in collaborating (with the illustrious and unfortunate Algernon Sidney) certain constitutions at his home. I quote part of a letter germane to this subject, written by him at this time, viz:—"This made me remember the discourse we had together at my house about me drawing constitutions, not as proposals, but as if to the hand," also "upon this thou didst draw a draft, as to the form of government, gave it to me to read, and we discoursed it with considerable argument." The constitution, referred to above, was published in London in 1682.

The Sylvan Province that bears the patronymic of the great statesman, legislator and philanthropist indelibly stamped on its history, is recognized by all, but the mind insensibly adverts toward the itinerant shoemaker apprentice of Drayton, to the Quaker Colporteur on his lonely journey through the wilds of America; we listen to the thrilling story of his wanderings, and cannot but trace to that earnest and intrepid man, that champion of the untrammelled conscience, that protagonist of a faith and creed which now, after the lapse of more than two centuries and a half, remains virile and true, the fons et origo, the source and origin of those occult forces, moral and physical, which culminated in the founding of the Imperial state (*imperium in imperio*)—of Pennsylvania, with its opulent metropolis, situate on the very bluff on the bank of the Delaware, which, the passengers on the ship "Shields from Hull," sailing up the stream to Bridlington, saw December 10, 1677, and exclaimed "a fine spot for a town."

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

I have alluded to the delay in the departure of Fenwick and his colonists, from the date of the purchase in 1673 until the summer of 1675 and stated that it was due to two causes—the contention as to the shares of the Province between him and Byllinge and the poverty of the promoters of the movement, the latter being the greater of the impediments as, although many sales of tracts to those interested, were made (at however ridiculously low prices) the leader was unable to get away, nor would he have been for an indefinite period, had it not been for two men who had some money they were willing to loan, on the security of his lauded interest in New Jersey; the *menus plaisirs*, i e;—the privy purse of Fenwick, like that of many another bold adventurer, being at that time in a state of collapse.

These men, whose "filthy lucre" overcame the present difficulty were, John Eldridge and Edmund Warner, and this loan on mortgage must have been in the nature of a sale, for, as soon as the legal documents were executed, they also began to sell to the eager purchasers, thirsting for change.—"*Cupidus novarum rerum*," lots and tracts of land of any size and in any location desired.

These sales became a source of great dissatisfaction in many cases—one of which is included in this paper—and shows how Fenwick resented, what he deemed an intrusion into his affairs by his quondam benefactors, and which ultimately caused the discharge of his Surveyor General—Richard Hancock.

Fenwick seems to have had an exaggerated notion of the subject of his own importance. His assumption of the title of "Lord Proprietor," and his oath of allegiance, to which most of the early colonists subscribed, were certain to get him into trouble. Sir Edmund Andross testified in London, that he claimed more

authority in the Province, "than was belonging to any subject." and his dissections finally compelled the sale, of all his tenth, except one hundred and fifty thousand acres, to William Penn.

Many of the original sales of land, and warrants of surveys, were made to and for purchasers living in certain parts of the City of London, viz—Shadwell, Lyme house in the Parish of Stepney, White Chapple, county of Middlesex, and Stebonheath, where James Nevill lived and carried on his business of a weaver. He was attorney for widow Elizabeth Smith, of White Chapple, for land on Monmouth River—Fenwick's Colony in 1678, viz—"1678, June 21st, Warrent of Survey to James Nevill, of Stebonheath, alias Stepney, county of Middlesex, weaver, as attorney for widow Elizabeth Smith, of White Chapple, same county, for 500 acres in Alloways Allotment or as near as may be on the N. E. side of Monmouth River." (Salem Surveys No. 2.)

The above land was sold to the widow Elizabeth Smith or Smythe, by Fenwick, May 5, 1675, before he sailed from England, viz:—"1675 Fenwick to Elizabeth Smith of the Parish of St. Mary White Capple, county of Middlesex, widow, for 500 acres of Fenwick's Colony." (New Jersey Colonial Documents, Salem No. 1.) Ann Craven, widow of "Richard Craven, of Lymehourse, county of Middlesex, baker, deed," who also lived in the above precinct, became infected with the contagious land fever then raging in London. She had been left a widow with three little children, viz:—Ann Craven, Thomas Craven and Peter Craven, and was apparently a near friend to the widow Elizabeth Smith, as, when she bought a five hundred lot of John Eldridge (both, at the date of the purchase, March 20th, 1676-7, being residents of Shadwell, London,) she stipulated that it should adjoin the widow Elizabeth Smith's 500 acres 'as it runneth up Monmouth River," and when Fenwick issued

a warrant for the survey of a portion of it in 1679, we find the location ordered there, and also the name by which it was to be known—"Craven's Choice," viz:—"1679, September 7th. Do, same to widow Ann Craven, late of Lymehouse, in the Parish of Stepney, county of Middlesex, England, now of New Salem, N. J., for 200 acres to be called "Craven's Choice," in Fenwick's Colony, on the North side of and along Alloways Creek, adjoining Smythe's alias Nevill's Plantation." (West Jersey Colonial Documents, Salem Deeds, Libere B.)

By this deed we know, that the Widow Craven had before the autumn of 1679, safely crossed the ocean, and in imagination can see this brave woman, surrounded by her little brood, standing on the deck of the vessel as it ascended Salem Creek, absorbed in the surrounding prospect, her heart elate with gratitude and hope.

How long she had been a resident of the Colony we do not surely know, but she had bought a lot of ten acres in New Salem, exactly two years before, and probably had then located there, viz:—"1677, September 7th. Do Do. For a survey of 10 acres in New Salem Township for widow Ann Craven." ("Warrant for Samuel Hedge to survey. New Jersey Colonial Documents, Salem Surveys N. 2.)

But a more valid reason for the surmise that the widow had been for a considerable period established there, is the fact, that about this date, i. e.:—"January, 11th month 1679-80," she had not only made another choice, (to which, however, she did not give, but rather surrendered her name) but also had made a marriage settlement upon the object thereof—Charles Bagley, viz:—"1678-80 ——— 11th m 1 Jan.) Marriage settlement, widow Ann Craven (as before) with her husband-to-be, Charles Bagley, late of Chap'anke, Talbott county, Maryland, by which she gives him the forgoing 200

acres, subject to payments to her children, Ann Craven, Thomas Craven and Peter Craven." (Salem Deeds Liber B.)

We infer from the reference to his former abode, that Bagley was a comparatively recent arrival in the Salem Tenth, possibly subsequently to that of his intended wife. He seems to have been a pushing individual, impeded by neither diffidence nor illiteracy, the making of his mark instead of signing his name, showing that he was not embarrassed by that "dangerous thing" the poet has called "a little knowledge."

There is an apparent mercenary motive, on the part of Bagley in the above transaction, that savors more of modern ethics, than those of over two centuries ago, which offends the moral sense; the trifling guerdon or rather dot bestowed by the prospective bride, augmenting the unpleasing thought.

The marriage, (which was preceded by an antinuptial contract for the protection of the three children and which was considered worthy of publication in the New Jersey archives, as an illustration of the laws then in force, for that purpose,) must have been speedily solemnized, as, about this time we find the following abstract, viz:—

"1680, September 13th. Minutes of a Special Court. James Nevill, Wm. Penton, Richard Guy, Edw'd Bradway, Edw'd Wade, commisrs "Order granting to Charles Baggily a warrant to Richard Hancock for the survey of 200 acres of land, part of the 500 acres, which his wife in her widowhood had from John Eldridge and Edmond Warner." (Salem Surveys No. 2.) "1680, September 16th. Do Do. By order of Court (supra P 14) to Charles Bagley, of 200 acres, on the North branch of Alloways Creek." (Salem Surveys No. 2.)

A few years after the above acquisition, Bagley sold a part of it, which is of interest, as it shows that his first wife, the former widow Ann Craven,

was, at that date, still alive, viz:—"1683, June 22d, Deed. Charles Bagley, of Alloways Creek, N. J., tanner, to Henry Jennings, of the same place, tailor and wife, Margrett, for 3 acres there, E. grantee, S. Alloways Creek, part of the 500 a lot, bought by Ann Craven, then of Shadwell, widow, now wife of grantor, of John Eldridge, of Shadwell, March 20, 1676-7." (Salem Deeds No. 2.)

But in 1688, April 30, the above purchase, or another of the same size, is conveyed to Henry Jennings, by deed of Charles Bagley, alone, wife's name omitted, from which we infer she was then dead, viz:—"1688, April 31st. Do. Charles Bagley, of Caesaria River, N. J., planter, to Henry Jennings, of Monmouth River, N. J., tailor and wife, Margrett, for 3 acres on said river, adjoining grantor," (Salem Deeds No. 4) and about the same date he sells also without co-operation of wife, what appears to have been, the original 300 acres, Ann Craven bought of Eldridge and Warner in 1675, and which she named "Craven's Choice," viz:—"1688, May 1st. Charles Bagley, of West Jersey, planter, to John Smith, of Grundell Hill or Monmouth River, Salem county, planter, for 300 acres on said river, along the East side of James Nevill." (Salem Deeds No. 4.)

The preceding deeds, besides their intimation of the death of the original owner of "Craven's Choice," tell us that Charles Bagley had changed his residence from Alloways Creek to Caesaria River, and his occupation of a tanner to that of planter, also that in 1688, some five years after his arrival in Fenwick's Colony. John Smith, afterward of Hedgefield, still lived at Grundell Hill, on the northern bank of Alloways Creek, and had not then purchased the estate in Mannington, with which his name was afterward associated, and where he lived for many years before his death. Indeed the latter transaction was not consummated, until eight years later, viz:

"1696, September 8th. Deed. Samuel Hedge, of Salem Town, gentleman, and wife, Ann, to John Smith, late of Grundell Hill, on Alloways Creek, Salem county, yeoman, for 1160 acres, the now remaining part of Hedgefield and tract of 2000 acres, on Manneton Creek, bequeathed to grantors by John Fenwick." (Salem Deeds No. 6.)

But on the same date of the first deed to John Smith, i e:—May 1st, 1688, we find another from Bagley to him, for 500 acres, excepting half a acre, viz:—"Charles Bagley to John Smith, of Grundell Hill, Monmouth River, alias Alloways Creek, 500 acres in Alloways Creek adjoining James Newell's 500 acres. Witnessed by James Nevill and George Deacon. Endorsement on back "Excepting ½ acre sold to Edward Champneys and Roger Milton." This is signed by both Bagley (his mark) and John Smith and is witnessed by William Hall and Samuel Hedge."

Although we are ignorant of the date of the demise of Charles Bagley's first wife, as well as that of his second marriage, we know from the following deed, that the latter event occurred before 1687, and that the christian name of his wife, was Elizabeth, viz:—"1686-7, March 10th. Do. Charles Bagley (wife Elizabeth) to William Daniel, both of Chohansey, Salem Tenth, yeomen, for 4 acres near the line of the Township of Greenwich, part of the 100 acre lot bought of John Adams." (Salem Deeds No. 7.)

Bagley died in the year 1699, leaving a widow, Elizabeth, and three minor children, Jean, Sarah and Charles. He was a Friend (and although as we have stated, destitute of the rudiments of a common school education,) active in important transactions in the Colony, as well as in the affairs of the religious sect to which he belonged. In 1680, March 25th, he, with many others, signed "The concessions and agreements of the proprietors, freeholders and inhabitants of

the Province of West New Jersey in America" and "1681, seventh month (July) 5th, "Charles Bagley together with George Deacon and John Forrest were requested"—"to go to John Fenwick and let him know that Friends have taken notice of his careless walking in respect to truth and let Friends know whether he hath a desire to walk more circumspectly for time to come." This proceeding appears to confirm the belief, that the Proprietor, at that period was somewhat indifferent regarding religious matters.

Charles Bagley passed the latter part of his life at "Chohansey," having resided there several years preceding the close of his active life, as we know he bought land there in the year 1687 his interest in the religious affairs of Friends remaining unabated during his latter years, as indicated by the following deed, viz:—"1693. December 25th. Joseph Brown, of the Town of Greenwich, upon Caesaria River, alias Chohansey River, Salem county, yeoman, to Charles Bagley for a lot 50 feet wide on the street and 55 feet long, between grantor's dwelling house and his barn for a meeting house and grave yard of the "people in scorn called Quakers who worshipping God in spirit and in truth." (Salem Deeds No. 6.)

Are we to infer from the foregoing transaction that the Grantee was one of the founders of Friends Meeting in Greenwich?

The character of Bagley appears to have been that of a fair, honorable man, and he faithfully kept his promises and agreements, (made however by due process of law) in behalf of his step children, after the death of their mother.

As the following document, the latter part of which I append, showing the custom then in usage amongst Friends as regards (in case of second marriages) provision being made for the support of children by a former marital union, re-

lates to this very case, and is probably the only one extant as regards Fenwick's Colony, it is of especial value, and has had its influence, (together with a deed showing the dissatisfaction caused, by Richard Hancock's surveys for John Eldridge,) in the selection by the writer of the subject of this paper.

We have quoted from the Archives, the antinuptial contract between the widow Ann Craven, of "Craven's Choice," and Charles Bagley, late of Choptanke, Talbott county, Maryland, and now, in this instrument, we have the transaction legally consummated which, when stripped of the redundant verbiage of the legal phraseology that almost conceals it, becomes apparent to an indifferent or even an obtuse understanding, viz:—that in the case of the demise of the wife, should he survive her, after his death the property she has transferred to him is to go:—"Then to the use and behoofe of the heirs and assigns of him the said Charles Bagley forever; provided that if he, the said Charles Bagley, heirs exors, administrators, or assigns, shall well and truly paye or satisfie, or cause to be well and truly payd or satisfied, in sterling money or goods equivalent the sum of eighteen pounds unto Ann Craven when she shall attaine to the age of sixteen years, unto Thomas Craven the sum of thirteen pounds when he shall attaine to the age of one and twenty years and unto Peter Craven the sum of thirteen pounds when he shall attaine to the age of one and twenty years or within one month after that the said three children of her, the said Ann Craven. Ptie to the presents doe attaine unto their generall ages aforesaid, or if two or any of them attaine (by being survivor) Unto her or his age aforesaid And that then the Said por'cion or por'cons be not then payd to them twoe or one of them so surviving as aforesaid That then the said "Craven's Choyce" and three hun-

dred acres of land, marsh and swampes shall be and enure to the use and behoofe of them the said Thomas Craven, Peter Craven and Ann Craven, to be divided Amongst them or the Survivor or Survivors of them and to the heirs and assignes of them or the Survivor of them for ever and not otherwise. In witness whereof she the said Ann Craven hath hereunto set her hand and seale the 5th day of the eleventh moth In the year by the English Act 1679, Etc."

Ann Craven."

"Sealed, signed and delivered in the presence of Samuel Hedge, Fenwick Adams, Richard Tyndall."

(Seal)

(Liber B Salem records in office of the Secretary of State, at Trenton, P 18.)

This document, a literary curiosity from its quaint diction and obsolete orthography, is, to my mind of greater interest as showing what the widow Ann Craven, at the very time of her nuptials, had most at heart—the welfare of her children—which intention being evidently paramount even in that auspicious hour.

"Sweet hour all hail! with envy pale
Which Jove himself, might see,

And own at least, the nectared feast,

Equalled, sweet hour, by thee."

in that hour of expectancy, when marriage bells were ringing, even then, her maternal love and solicitude could not be diverted from her offspring, the children who had shared with her the perils of the sea and land, and with whom she now shared her little all, even treasured fields, which had lured her from her foreign home, to be reciprocated, only, by the filial affection of their innocent hearts. Nor do I believe that the haughty Baron, when he gave a designation befitting rank and power, to his feudal castle or lordly hall, felt half the pride in its title, as did this humble widow, when she gave to her small possession the name of her preference—"Craven's

Choyce," neither might the vineyards of Naboth, nor the groves, the torrents, the orchards and the brooks of Flaccus—

"Et. praeceps Anio, ac Tiburni lucus,
et uda

Mobilibus pomaria rivus"

have engendered and retained for them a more enduring charm.

In following the course of proceeding in this case, we find that within two years from the change in the social condition of their mother for which we have shown such precaution were taken in behalf of the Craven children, legal measure were instituted, viz:—"1687, August 21. Craven, Thomas, Peter and Ann, children of Robert Craven, whose widow became the wife of Charles Bagley. Testimony before Thomas Olive, Robert Stacey, Mahlon Stacey, Thomas Budd and Thomas Lambert, Commissioners for the Province of New Jersey, given by George Deacon, Richard Guy and John Smith in regard to payments to be made to the three children Craven by Charles Bagley, according to an instrument of 5th day, 11th month 1679."

The above abstract, together with other circumstances recorded in the Archives, awaken a suspicion that Charles Bagley was somewhat remiss or tardy in conforming with the provisions of the antinuptial contract, the Executors of John Fenwick, a few years later, demanding an accounting of his proceedings in this important matter, viz:—"1687, April 12. Wm. Penn, et al. executors of John Fenwick to Charles Bagley of Caesaria River, N. J., for account of the estate of Richard Craven, of Lynehouse county, of Middlesex, baker, decd., for 500 acres, 300 of which, near the head of Monmouth River, alias Alloways Creek, adjoining Widow Smith and James Newell; 200 acres on the North branch of said creek" (Salem Deeds No. 4) and as an apparent result, three days afterward, the following deed was executed, viz:—"1687, April 15. Deed. Charles Bag-

ly, of Caesaria River, N. J., planter, to his son-in-law (step-son) Thomas Craven of the same place, planter, for 200 acres, near the head of Alloways Creek, adjoining John Smith, of Grundell Hill." (Salem Deeds No. 4) also ten years later, about eighteen months before his death, Charles Bagley and wife, Elizabeth, made the following undefined assignment to Peter Craven, viz:—"1697, Oct. 18th ——— assignment by Charles Bagley and wife, Elizabeth, to Peter Craven, of Salem county, husbandman of the within tract of land." (Salem Deeds No. 6.)

No payments nor provision of any kind—for little Ann Craven—are recorded, we must therefore conclude, that she died before she reached the age of sixteen years, when the payment of the eighteen pounds, named in the previously quoted contract, became due.

The Ann Craven, who married Benjamin Ruge, of Salem, March 30th, 1731, was probably a daughter of Thomas Craven, (son of the widow Ann Craven), who died in the year 1721. Beside this daughter Ann, he also left a son Nahamiah "under age." We cannot, however, trace the male line of the Cravens and have reason for the surmise, that some bearing the surname belonged to another family, as, we know, for more than a century they were prominent citizens, in the public affairs of the county of Salem.

I quote from a paper written by Thomas Shourds, and read before this Society January 27, 1886, entitled, "Our Early Settlers," viz:—"In 1676 the wife of John Smith, of Amesbury, wrote to her sister, Rachel, and her husband, Richard Craven, giving them a description of this country and advising them to come to America, which they accordingly did and landed at New Castle in 1690 and came to Salem the same year. One of their sons settled in the State of Delaware. One of their granddaughters

(Rachel Craven) married Joseph, son of Richard and Mary Pledger Woodnutt; they had one son and three daughters, Hannah, one of their daughters, married Samuel Hedge the 4th."

If this is correct we are right in our conjecture; but at the date Thomas Craven's will was made—September 13th, 1721—and proved December 23d, 1730, we know three daughters were then living—Elizabeth, Rachel and Ann, and, it is not impossible that his daughter, Rachel, might have married Joseph Woodnutt.

In the list of letters remaining in the Philadelphia Post Office, published in 1763 in one directed to "John Craven Salem, and in 1812, Richard Craven was one of the freeholders from Lower Alloways Creek, also in 1828 and 1829 a Richard Craven was a freeholder from Lower Penn's Neck, and doubtless gave his name,—"Craven's Ferry"—about that time, to the town now known as Peunsville.

The fact that Charles Bagley appointed Thomas Craven, (together with his wife, Elizabeth,) one of the executors of his will, would indicate a kindly feeling, as well as confidence on the part of the former toward the latter, which, however, apparently was not mutual, as Thomas declined the honor, or to use the exact words—"refusing to act."

Although, the widow Ann Craven desired expressly, that her purchase in Fenwick's Colony,—"Craven's Choyce," should adjoin that of the widow Elizabeth Smith, thus indicating a desire and intention of living near each other there, the two widows did not come to America simultaneously. Several years elapsing before the latter arrived, long after her former friend and neighbor had passed away; as, three years after Ann Craven had married Charles Bagley the widow Smith was still residing in London, as shown by the following deed, viz:—"1683, June 14th, Deed. Widow

Elizabeth Smith, of Parish of St. Mary Mat fellow, alias White Chapple, county of Middlesex, to Benjamin East, of London, sugar baker, for 300 acres on Monmouth River, alias Alloways Creek, about 5 miles from Salem Town, part of a 500 a lot, granted to her, by John Fenwick, May 5th, 1675." (Salem Deeds No. 3.)

The next we hear of her is thirteen years later in 1696, when she is in Salem county, as indicated by another deed viz:—"1696. July 31st. Deed. Charles Angelo, of Salem Town, husbandman, to widow Elizabeth Smith, late of Cristiana Creek, Pennas, now of Salem county, for her life, and after her death, to Prudence, wife of Thomas Killingsworth, of said Town, gentleman, for a house and ten acres of land in said town, between John Paine and the creek, excepting a lot in the town marsh bought of Robert Coffin, May 27th, 1693." (Salem Deeds No. 6.)

The Widow Smith made her will two years later—September 28, 1698—and probably died soon after, although the inventory of her personal estate, which included "3 gold rings, 1 wedding ring, 2 samll £2; made by Thomas Killingsworth and Samuel Hedge, and not appraised until December 8th, 1701, more than three years later. We do not know her maiden name, but Prudence Killingsworth, wife of Thomas, was her sister, and her "daughter, Prudence, wife of John Vance Millwright" was "sole executrix."

Thomas Killingsworth, Rev. and Hon. a very prominent and influential man in the Colony, died in the year 1705. "Wife Prudence sole heiress and executrix." His personal estate amounted to "£297 10.0. inclu. books £10, a clock £8, negro girl £25." His wife, Prudence, survived him four years, dying in 1709. "Inventory of personal estate (£299.2.0 including plate £13, a few old books £2, 3 gold rings £3, coined gold and silver £13

a negro girl £25.)" We see from the above inventory, that the personal estate, had increased in the four years intervening between the deaths of herself and husband. £22.0 "Prudence Vance sole executrix and with Joanna MacKgregory heiress of the estate."

The foregoing data, relating to the Widow Smith, the Killingsworths, the Vances, and MacKgregorys, probably all connected by blood or marriage, shows how sometimes, whole families emigrated and settled near each other in the Province, and the desire expressed by the widow Ann Craven (already several times referred to) to have her purchase surveyed on land adjoining the widow Elizabeth Smith, while it might not imply an existing relationship, was the cause of considerable contention; the following return of survey, exhibiting, together with other inferences, how, in this particular instance, trouble followed the undefined locations, limits, butts and bounds, of properties sold to English purchasers, and the haphazard manner in which they were conveyed, also by its reference to the unsatisfactory relations subsisting between Richard Hancock and John Fenwick, which resulted in the dismissal of the former, followed by the appointment of Samuel Hedge and subsequently of Richard Tyndall as surveyors General of the Colony, viz:—

"1679, September 3d. Return of survey by Richard Hancock of 300 acres intended for Ann Craven, of New Salem, widow, deed., who refused to accept the deed viz t in the Township of East Fenwick along the East side of Smythe's plantation and Monmouth River." Margual Note: "Ann Craven, widow, she was to have it by proposall as followeth, wch her husbands and friends diswiaded her from, as appears from their deeds of settlement wch they never sealed, nor would pay for but accepted of an Arbitrarie permit for 500 acres, whereby Rich d Hancock by his illegal warr t

web he had surveyed and was pay d
 him first as appears by his certificate." (West Jersey Records Liber B part 2.)
 But what have we here ? decd, the ordinary abbreviation of deceased, dead and husbands—Polyandry ! Death and implied if not actual bigamy ! What aspersions upon the character of a live female and reputable widow. Impossible—these unwarranted slanders may readily be disposed of, the former imputation being, under the circumstances, only the necrobiosis, physiological molecular dissolution, the antithesis of general dissolution, and conservator of life; somatic death, the final triumph of the grim tyrant, being quite incompatible with the

impending rites of Hymen's gentle sway, within the Myrtle groves that shade Cythera's bowers where laughing Venus holds her Court of Love. As regards her former spouse, the bigamous mendacity falls flat, disproven and confuted, by the fact, that the defunct baker, had long been lying prone and lifeless at Lyme-house beyond the sea, his vacant chair as yet unoccupied, even by the aspiring suitor to the hand of his incongruous, paradoxical relict, (by casual inadvertence, living yet dead, a widow unreleased from matrimonial bonds*)—Charles Bagley———the officious tanner from Choptanke.

E. S. S.

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